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POINTS ABOUT PLOWS

The Development of This Basic Agricultural Implement.

Began With Sharpened Pieces of Wood—Iron Plows Used by the Romans — Introduction of the Subsoil Plow—British and American Plows the Climax in Development.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

Sharpened stakes and crooked limbs of trees were the earliest substitutes for the plow in historical times, and their use has been common among the nations. The ancient Egyptian plow was but a pointed stick. The early Greeks used the trunk of a small tree with two branches opposite, one forming the share and the other the handle, while the trunk formed the pole or beam. The iron plow used by the Romans. Iron plows were used many centuries before the Christian era by the Romans, and the iron was used for a double purpose—for plow-points one year and for swords and spears the next. As iron was scarce in those days, the Romans greatly improved the plow by putting on a wheel and also a coulter. Many races of people showed a widespread hostility to the use of iron in connection with agriculture, believing that iron poisoned the land.

Wooden Plows Used in America 140 Years Ago.

The people of all countries went through the early experience of finding a way and means of tilling the soil, some slowly, some rapidly, and curiously enough the first plow of all nations were much the same in spite of the fact that some nations started thirty or forty centuries ahead of the others. The wooden plow is only a country and a half remote in American agriculture. It is curious to trace the progress of plowmaking in Britain, where Caesar introduced the plow about 55 B.C. Those of the early cultivators were of necessity rude and imperfect, for in those days the plowman was obliged by law to make a plow before he was permitted to use one. It is uncertain whether the early British plow had wheels, but some of those of the Saxons were furnished with them. The Norman plow was furnished with wheels, and it was usual for the plowman to carry a hatchet to break the clods.

Introduction of the Subsoil Plow.

The first attempt at the construction of a subsoil plow was made in 1877. It loosened the land up to a depth of four or five inches. It is not necessary to do more than point to the various and numerous references which are found in early history of this valuable implement. For ages the plow was little more than a clumsy instrument, which served only to tear up the surface of the land sufficiently deep for the seeds to be buried. It was not until the close of the seventeenth century that the Dutch were amongst the first who brought the plow more into shape, and soon its best features were copied and included in the Britisher's idea of a plow.

The Rotherham plow was made by J. Rotherham at Rotherham, and a patent was granted for it in 1730. It was then the most perfect in use, and is still well known after two centuries. This plow was constructed chiefly of wood, the draft iron share and coulter and the plating on the mould board and sole being the only parts made of iron. With the development of the iron industry, it was but a short time before plows were made entirely of iron and steel were being made.

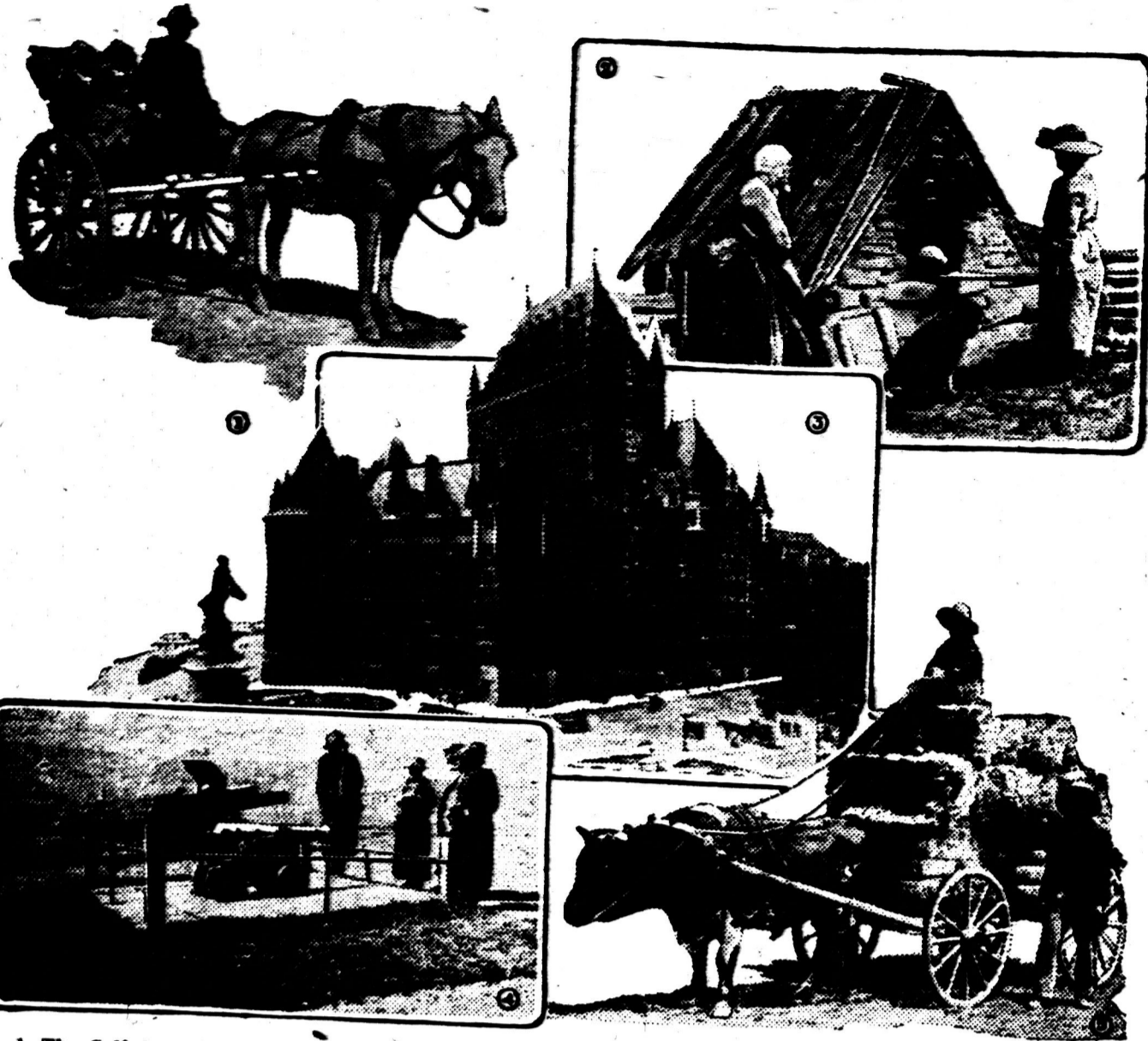
James Small, a Scotsman, was the first inventor and manufacturer of the cast-iron mould board. At that time (1760) the plow was generally the joint manufacture of the village wheelwright and blacksmith. Plow-shares had been made of wrought iron until 1785, when a patent was granted to Robert Ransome for the making of cast-iron shares. The case hardening process as applied to cast-iron shares was the subject of a patent granted in 1803.

British Plows the Climax in Development.

The Rotherham plow, Small's chain plow, and Small's Scotch plow represented the climax in plow development previous to 1800, and the men whose ingenuity, spirit, and perseverance brought about the development in plow making were Rotherham, Small, Wilkie, Finlayson and Ransome. The work and development of the plow during the past 150 years is too well known to all to warrant its mention here.

The old plowmen simply scratched the soil with their crude implements, going over the field time and time again, crossing and re-crossing until they had worked up a few inches into a seed bed. The Roman farms were rarely over five acres in extent, and when our forefathers in this country used the old wooden plow, the clearings among the stumps were small. The two century gap between the old reaper that scratched the soil surface and the new multiple bottom tractor plow of to-day is a long stretch for the numerous plow milestones that mark the way to mark the progress of Agriculture.—L. Stevenson, O. A. C. Guelph.

Quebec, the Old World Province



1. The Catbete, a means of conveyance much favoured by visitors to Quebec.
2. An old brick oven, the like of which was used in France four centuries ago.
3. Chateau Frontenac, Quebec, the most modern hostelry on the continent, from a glorious height looks down on old Quebec and on the early battle fields.
4. Ancient and modern. The little cannon captured by the British at Bunker Hill, rests near the Quebec Citadel by the side of a howitzer which fell to the Canadians in the Great War.
5. Though their farms are modern, some farmers still use the ox as beast of burden in the back country.

These are just a few pictures taken in Quebec. It is not without reason that this province is becoming the tourist resort of the continent, for here is a country of utmost fascination and intrigue. Quebec has an atmosphere all its own and, if it can be said, more of an old-world atmosphere than has the old-world of today. Quebec is the eighteenth century keeping pace with the twentieth, yet retaining its identity.

One stops at little wayside shrines. The wooden cross, the patron saint in effigy, the nurtured flowers, the woman at her distaff, the white-walled houses close at hand transport you to the distant land from whence the original settlers came. Yet, over there, beyond that little hedge or cedar fence the farmer gathers in his crop with up-to-date machinery, and stores it in a modern barn. Behind, the hum of the telegraph wire reminds you that you are not living in a by-gone day and, if that is not enough, through the not too distant fields, a huge train thunders.

Near the white walls the lady of the house draws water from the old-fashioned well, and bakes her bread in an old brick oven, the like of which was used by her ancestors in France four centuries ago. She spins her own wool and shares with her husband a faith, which though not old-fashioned, is almost as old as the Christian era. A kindly hospitable soul is she, nor is she always backward in learning, for she probably attended the convent of the Ursulines at Quebec, or la petite école at Louisbourg. And her husband—He may be content to wear the homespun, to sit around the fire, or on the threshold at night, to smoke his "Rouge Queen" and to drive five miles to church early on all holidays in his buggy or in the straw lined cart that is used about the farm, but he "knows his letters" and, better still, he knows how to farm.

The Quebec farm is usually up-to-date. Your "habitant" gets all that can be got from the soil, and if you sit with him and talk you will see that he gets the

fullness of life too. Give him the simple pleasures. He is happy if he can re-tell the story of the big moose he shot too, "for sure I catch him lots of skin, me!"

The "old man," the "old woman" and that large, very so, for theirs is a rich heritage, and beautiful. The mighty St. Lawrence and its thousand tributaries, the glorious Laurentians, with their wooded slopes, the forests, lakes and myriad streams give them a country almost unexcelled for beauty. Game and fish abound as has been discovered by sportsmen from outside. Moose, trout, muskinnongie, the big black bass, bear, deer and caribou, ground of the early days of Canadian settlement. Lost and re-captured several times her old walls still bear the marks of storm, and the old cannons still guard the city and the approaches to the citadel.

The history of Quebec is the history of Canada, priest, soldier and pioneer settler each having played a glorious part in the making of it. With the fair Dominion as its lasting memorial to their valor and courage, Quebec links them with the present day; their faith, piety, and the work they commenced are being preserved and carried on by the present generation. The relics of their day scattered here and there, and on almost every street, look down or out upon the most modern improvements of the age, the railways, and the huge Canadian Pacific and other steamships at the docks, but lose not their identity, and in the case of buildings and public places, their charm and interest.

All through Quebec province, and in the most unexpected places one comes across historic links with the past. Like her people Quebec is quiet, peaceful, and does not crave the limelight, but Quebec is not and cannot be overlooked. It is an old world, full of charm, within the new.

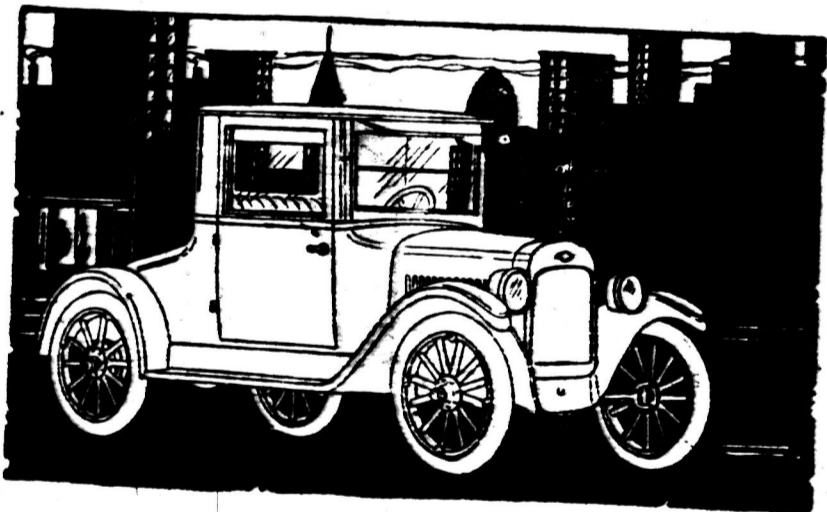
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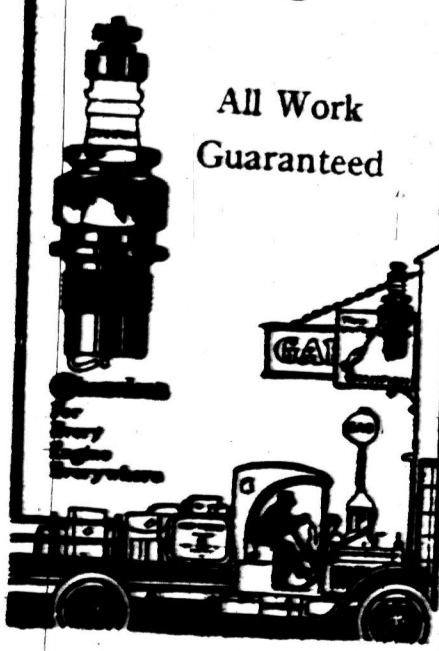
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